

TRY SOMETHING NEW EXPLORE CREEKSIDE

THE BLOOMINGTON SENIOR Program offers more than 60 activities and services, including card clubs, crafts, billiards, computer classes, music and food programs and more. Attend a *Get Acquainted with Creekside* session on the first Wednesday of each month, from 10 - 11 a.m., to learn more about the programs and opportunities offered at Creekside.



EXPAND YOUR HORIZONS NEW SOCIAL GROUP FORMED

Are you an adult age 50 or older who would like the opportunity to meet new people? Human Services is looking for people interested in getting a social group up and running. If you're willing to share a little time and lots of ideas, call 952-563-4949; TTY 952-563-4957 V/TTY.



AMERICAN HEART MONTH

KNOW YOUR RISK FACTORS FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES are our nation's number one killer. This year alone, about 452,000 Americans will die from heart-related conditions. To urge Americans to join the battle against these diseases, the U.S. Congress has made February American Heart Month.

"The good news is, many of the problems related to cardiovascular disease can be alleviated or prevented through healthy diet and lifestyle," said Bloomington Public Health Program Manager Karen Stanley. "You know your risk factors and take appropriate action."

Many risk factors, such as tobacco-use, high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, physical inactivity, obesity and diabetes, can be controlled. If you don't know your cholesterol level, now is the time to get it checked. Tests are available through the City's Health Risk Assessment Clinic. The next clinic will be held on **Tuesday, April 8**. Testing is by appointment only.

For more information or to make an appointment, call 952-563-8900.

CREEKSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER

9801 PENN AVENUE S., 952-563-4944, TTY 952-563-4957

FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICES

CHOOSE FROM TWO AVAILABLE PROGRAMS

FREE INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE is available at Creekside on a first-come, first-served basis to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines. Tax assistance includes the following programs:

ACCOUNTABILITY MINNESOTA

AccountAbility Minnesota will provide tax assistance to individuals with incomes of \$30,000 or less, and families with incomes of \$40,000 or less.

When: Tuesdays, February 12 - April 15
Time: 6 - 9 p.m.
When: Thursdays, February 7 - April 10
Time: 6 - 9 p.m.
When: Saturdays, February 9 - April 12
Time: 9 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. (*In March, hours will be extended to 2:30 p.m.*)



TAX FORMS AVAILABLE AT CREEKSIDE

Federal tax forms are available to be photocopied at Creekside.

AARP TAX-AIDE

In partnership with the City of Bloomington, AARP Tax-Aide will provide free tax preparation services to middle- and low-income taxpayers, with special attention to adults age 60 and older. The AARP Tax-Aide program prepares personal income tax returns including the 1040, 1040A and 1040EZ. Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

When: Mondays, February 11 - April 14 (*Except February 18*)
Time: 9 a.m. - noon
When: Tuesdays, February 12 - April 15



Bloomington Police Department Explorers pose for a group shot.



ON PATROL GET TO KNOW YOUR BPD

THE BLOOMINGTON POLICE Department (BPD) prides itself on being more than just "in" the community, it is an integral part of the community. The values statement of the Police Department encourages partnerships with youth. Police outreach programs, such as the Bloomington Explorers and the Cops and Kids baseball, basketball and hockey programs, are committed to helping Bloomington youth.

Since 1972, more than 350 young men and women have worn the Explorer uniform. Law enforcement exploration is designed for males and females, 14 - 21 years of age, who have an interest in law enforcement.

The Bloomington Cops and Kids youth sports program, which began as an all-volunteer baseball clinic six years ago, has grown to include hockey and basketball.

Speaking engagements are also a common occurrence. The Community Response and Enforcement Unit may talk about the harmful effects of drugs, while the Bomb Squad, SWAT and Crisis Negotiations teams may demonstrate their skills and talk about high-risk incidents.

Above and beyond the formal programs, officers do "directed patrols" during their shifts, such as eating lunch with school children and teaching safety. On their own time, many members of the Police Department tutor students at Westwood Elementary, work with Special Olympics or coach basketball. A heart for youth might be the best tool BPD officers have and the tool that sets them apart.

For more information on the Bloomington Police Department, call 952-563-4900, e-mail police@ci.bloomington.mn.us, or visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us.



Q Have you encountered any roadblocks?

Dries: The media often wants to show only the negative side. I also think people are afraid that interacting with people of other faiths means that we water down our own beliefs. That's not true.

Huq: There are a lot of misconceptions out there. I think we have to stop being afraid of being politically incorrect and start asking more questions. We need to have more honest, open exchanges.

Q What are the commonalities between you?

Dries: We are all family. I think we both believe very strongly in outreach, not to convert, but to help people in need.

Huq: Our struggles are the same. We may be Muslim, we may be Christian, but we're all "Minnesotans."

For more information on teaching tolerance, call the Human Rights Commission at 952-563-8733.



Officers join Bloomington youth for Cops and Kids hockey.